The Herbal Bed

PETER WHELAN

DESIGNED AND DIRECTED BY JENNIFER WILLISON

BY ARRANGEMENT WITH WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC

London printed by *George Purslowe*, and are to be sold by at Christ

FIRST PERFORMANCE 28 JULY 1999

PYMBLE PLAYERS

Cast

DOMINIC HIDES
Rafe Smith

DAVID QUINN
John Hall

KATIE JAMES
Hester Fletcher

MADELEINE JAMES
Susanna

STEPHEN DUNLEVY
Jack Lane

KEN STEGEMAN
Barnabus Goche, Vicar-General

MAURICE PEPPER
Bishop Parry of Worcester

LAUREN KEOGH and MELINDA NASS
Elizabeth Hall

Time

JUNE 1613

PLANTAIN **(plantago lanceolata)**
This herb has a long traditional use in the treatment of sores and wounds. Stimulates the healing process.

ST JOHN'S WORT **(hypericum perforatum)**
A remedy for healing wounds and burns when applied externally. Many other virtues are ascribed to it, such as aiding digestive disorders, irregular menstruation and blood circulation.

SAGE **(salvia officinalis)**
A remedy for headache, rheumatism, hoarseness, greying hair, discoloured teeth, toothache and failing memory.

LEMON BALM **(melissa officinalis)**
The Arabs introduced it as especially of benefit in anxiety or depression. Used to relieve melancholy.

WORMWOOD **(artemisia absinthium)**
A bitter herb and a powerful stimulant. It contains several substances which can harm if taken in excess (including a hallucinogen). Used to aid digestion, and as a tincture for nervous diseases.

Act I

Scene 1 : The garden of Doctor Hall's house
Scene 2 : The same, half and hour later
Scene 3 : The same, that night

INTERVAL (15 minutes)

Act II

Scene 1 : The same, two days later
Scene 2 : Worcester Cathedral (consistory court)
Scene 3 : The garden at Doctor Hall's house, an evening some weeks later

Designer, Director	JENNIFER WILLISON
Stage Manager	TINA De MICHIEL
Assistant Stage Managers	LIBBY HUGGETT, ANNIE STRAT
Continuity	SYLVIA PEPPER
Lighting Design	LIONEL WILLISON
Lighting, Sound Operators	SYLVIA PEPPER, SUE WILLIS
Costumes	VICKI NIELD, DIANNE PEARSON
Publicity	JAN McLACHLAN, DIANE ABBOTT
Photography	DAVID COX
Programme/Poster Design	VALDA BROOK
Front of House	HELEN WILLIAMS
Set Construction	CHARLES WILLIAMS, JENNIFER WILLISON, LIONEL WILLISON, DIANE ABBOTT, RENE BARTEL, VICKI NIELD, SYLVIA & MAURICE PEPPER

1999 season continues

'...That Christmas of '75

by Wendy Richardson
directed by Helen Williams
13 OCTOBER to 6 NOVEMBER
Bookings open 22 SEPTEMBER

Christmas Panto

Cinderella and the Spacegirls

(? room for one more)

by Joan Dalgleish
directed by Patsy Templeton
Saturdays 4, 11, 18 DECEMBER
Bookings open 10 NOVEMBER

Bookings 9144 1523

Adults $15 Concessions $12.50

Note: The use of recording equipment such as cameras, video cameras and cassette recorders is prohibited. Also, please remember to switch off mobile phones, pagers, and wrist watch alarms.
Your cooperation is appreciated.

Of Puritans and Catholics

the Reformation in England

Henry VIII was not a religious reformer. However, in 1533 he did something that would change the course of English religious and political history: he made himself, rather than the Pope, the head of the Church of England. His motives were personal and political, rather than religious. The Pope had refused to grant him a divorce so that he might re-marry and father an heir. Prior to this momentous break, there was essentially one universal church of western christendom, headed by the Pope in Rome.

By the end of Henry's reign (1547), there had been some subtle changes to the religious landscape - the Bible was in English in many churches, and there were fewer saints decorating churches. However, the services were still in Latin, the priests still wore elaborate vestments and the community took part in many seasonal religious celebrations.

After Henry's death, Edward VI, a Protestant, came to the throne. During his reign, reformist religion made some progress. However, before much could be done to establish the reformed religion, King Edward died in 1553. Queen Mary, his elder half-sister and successor, was a Roman Catholic. She began a counter-reformation. Mary died in 1558 and was succeeded by her Protestant half-sister Elizabeth I. The new Elizabethan regime set out once again to build a Protestant nation, and succeeded.

■ King James I of England

Despite these advances in Protestantism, many reformers were of the view that England was in need of more reformation than the Queen and her bishops would allow. The phenomenon of 'Puritanism' emerged in Elizabeth's reign.

Both Puritans and Catholics hoped that James I would lift constraints on their religious practice when he came to the throne in 1603. But he proved to be a defender of the church as it was.

Puritans and reformers became increasingly frustrated with the lack of reform and the tolerance of increasingly ceremonialist practices from the traditional church. However, these different factions did co-exist within the Church. It was thus possible for a Bishop to be part of the old church tradition, while having a Vicar-General (a layman who assisted a Bishop in his judicial and administrative duties) who was a zealous reformist.

with thanks to
JANE FITZGERALD and
Margaret Little

medicine: science and witchcraft

"If a woman dare to cure without having studied, she is a witch and must die".

Malleus Maleficarium (a 16th century witch-hunting text)

During the sixteenth century, the medical profession was emerging as a separate entity from unofficial local healing men and women.

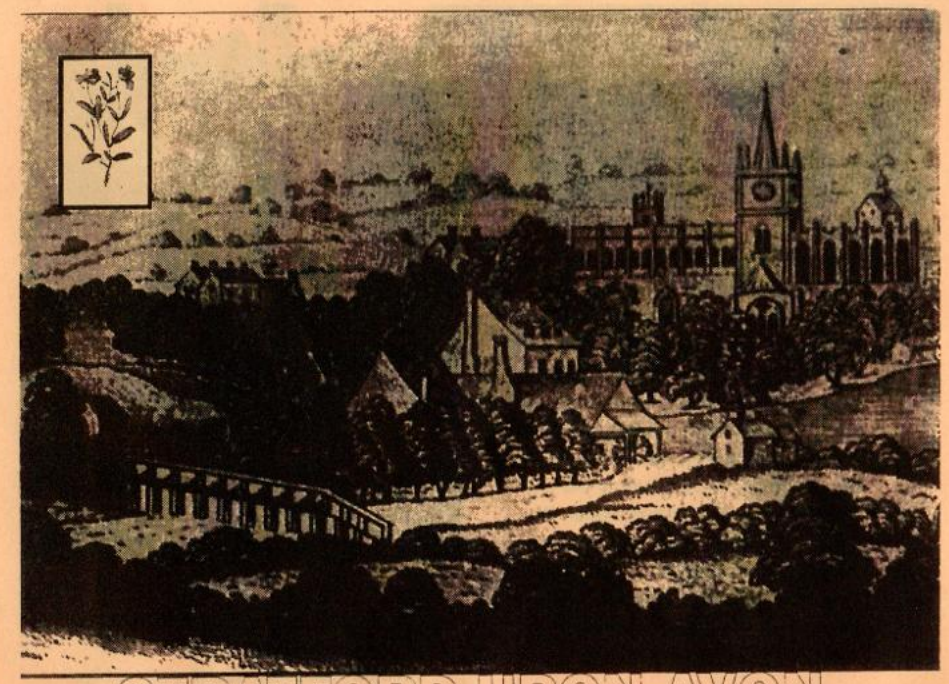
In pre-industrial Europe, women were most often the healers in a community, favoured over male doctors. Although these male doctors used much the same herbal remedies as the local 'wise-women' might, they also did painful and expensive procedures such as blood letting and cauterising (burning with a hot iron for curative purposes).

However, women healers challenged the supremacy of the church and of men, and being displeasing to the church, were gradually discredited through various mechanisms. One of these was the acts passed against witchcraft and sorcery in England in 1542 and Scotland in 1563 which helped establish the official medical profession as having a special legitimacy. Most people tried as witches were local healing women who had 'the devilishe of her tongue', that is, were outspoken. The term 'witch' had been fostered by the medieval church, to whom disease was a God-given affliction, and thus to be kept under strict religious control. The church's claim was not that witches were unable to cure illness, or that curing was of itself wrong, but that their success was the consequence of an alliance with the devil.

Official healing was that taught in universities, and considered scientific. It gradually gained political power and a monopoly over the explanation of disease and healing. Medicine as a profession gradually closed its doors to those without university licences from the thirteenth century - and of course women were almost without exception barred from universities. This was another effective method of marginalising women healers.

There was a very close link between the church and medical practice; doctors were used as judges in witch-trials, and church authorities regulated doctors and midwives. Again, this conspired to prevent women healers from practising.

From *Alternative Medicine in Britain*, Mike Saks, editor, Clarendon Press, 1992



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

By the time Shakespeare was born, Stratford-upon-Avon was one of Warwickshire's most important market towns and it already had appreciable contacts with the outside world. The site of Roman and Saxon occupation, Stratford was from early times a meeting-place of roads. In 1553 it was granted self-governing borough status.

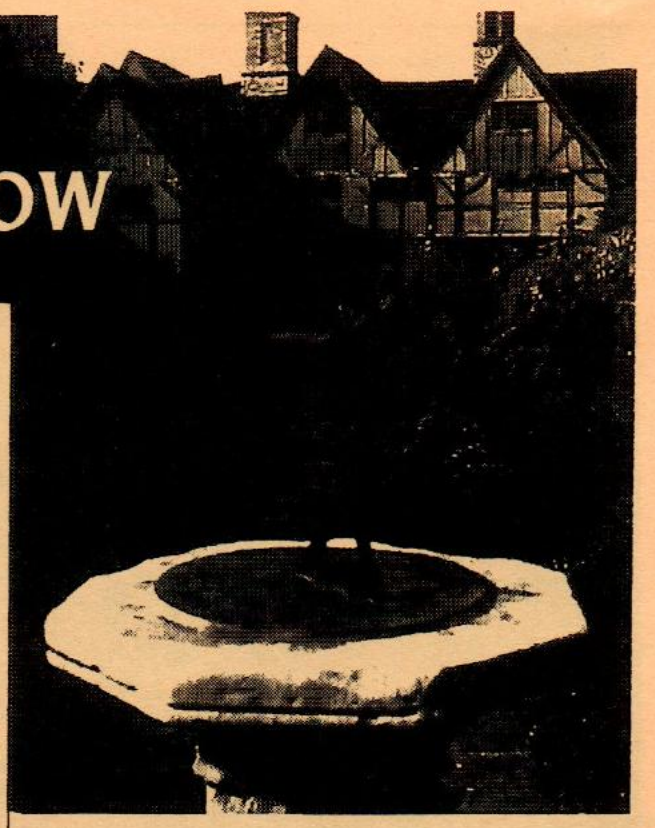
Judged by modern standards the Stratford which Shakespeare knew was very small both in size and population. Its inhabitants did not total two thousand and to walk around its boundaries took little more than twenty minutes. The town comprised a compact street plan, 'well-builded of timber', as one visitor said, but with an abundance of trees and orchards interspersed among the houses and shops. Most of the buildings were half-timbered, the nearby Forest of Arden (used by Shakespeare as the setting for *As You Like It*) providing the necessary timber.

The town was a centre of schooling and varied business activity. Corn and malt particularly were sold at its market and fairs, together with agricultural produce, cattle, horses and sheep. Country crafts and trades also flourished, not the least prosperous being that of the glovers to which the poet's father, John Shakespeare, belonged.

From *The Shakespeare Book*, Levi Fox, 1991

■ PICTURE: An early sketch of Stratford, from *Historic Stratford-upon-Avon*, Levi Fox, 1986

what we know



We know that in 1607 Shakespeare's elder daughter, Susanna, married John Hall, a successful physician. They set up home at what is now called Hall's Croft. They had a daughter, Elizabeth, an only child. Five years later, when Susanna was thirty, she was publicly slandered by a young gentleman, John Lane (or Jack, as I call him), second son of the well-heeled family of Alveston Manor. We know that Susanna brought a charge of defamation against him in the diocesan court at Worcester cathedral, which is how we have the exact wording of the slander, from the court archive.

Jack Lane claimed that Susanna Hall 'had the runinge of the reynes and had been naught with Rafe Smith at John Palmer.'

We know that Rafe Smith was a haberdasher and hatter of Sheep Street, Stratford. He was, more than likely, a friend of the Halls, since his uncle, Hamnet Sadler, was closely associated with Susanna's father. John Palmer was a cousin of Smith's with a house in Stratford.

Jack Lane was twenty-three when he defamed Susanna. We know that he also later libelled the vicar of Holy Trinity and was sued for riot and charged with drunkenness by the churchwardens.

We know that Vicar-General Goche presided over the court in Worcester cathedral and is thought to have been a puritan. Bishop Parry we know to have been a man celebrated for his sermons at James' Court, not a supporter of the puritanical tendency.

Dr Hall certainly was of that tendency. He is on record as calling for firm church discipline, but he was no bigot. He treated Catholics... and he married Susanna, who had once been on the list for not receiving the sacrament at Holy Trinity Chuch. (This could have carried the stigma of leanings towards Rome.) As for Susanna's character, what little we know is from the epitaph on her tomb, close to Shakespeare's.

We have a goldmine of information on Hall as a doctor since he left behind a unique, detailed casebook. Joan Lane's *John Hall and his Patients* contains a facsimile of the seventeenth century translation from the Latin. As you will find, I have raided it frequently.

But, in the end, the play was never intended as historical documentary. It was the pain of the moral dilemma detectable behind this small handful of facts that drew me to write it.

PETER WHELAN

■ PHOTO: Hall's Croft from *Historic Stratford-upon-Avon*, Levi Fox, 1986